

Listing of the Claims

Claims 1-12. (Canceled)

Claim 13. (Withdrawn) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition having a pH of between about 7 and about 10 and comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 18. (Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition having a pH of between about 7 and about 10 and comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 19. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 23. (Amended) A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

raising tooth surface pH to between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the tooth surface with a peroxide-containing or peroxide releasing tooth bleaching composition.

Claim 24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein the step of raising tooth surface pH includes applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 25. (Amended) The method of claim 23 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 29. (Amended) A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition capable of buffering tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 30. (Amended) The method of claim 29 wherein the composition capable of buffering tooth surface pH includes a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 32. (Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

buffering tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 33. (Amended) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of buffering include applying to the tooth surface a composition comprising a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and ammonium carbonate~~, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 35. (Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

maintaining tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 36. (Amended) The method of claim 35 wherein the step of maintaining includes applying a composition including a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and ammonium carbonate~~, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 38. (Withdrawn) A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth,

wherein the pH at the tooth surface is between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 40. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 41. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 42. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained during tooth whitening at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claims 43-48. (Canceled)

Claim 49. (Withdrawn) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 51. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 52. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 53. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 54. (Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 55. (Amended) The method of claim 54 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 56. (Previously presented) The method of claim 54 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 57. (Previously presented) The method of claim 54 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 58. (Previously presented) The method of claim 54 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 59. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the composition comprising an alkalizing agent is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 60. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the composition comprising an alkalizing agent is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 61. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 62. (Amended) The method of claim 33 wherein the composition comprising a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 63. (Amended) The method of claim 36 wherein the composition including a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ~~and~~ ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine is a rinse, paste or gel.